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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The claims are 17-23 and 29-33 with claims 24-27 having previously been withdrawn by the Examiner as being directed to a non-elected invention. Claim 29 has been amended to better define the invention, and the remaining claims 17-23 and 30-33 under consideration have been amended in view of the amendment to claim 29. Support for the claims may be found, *inter alia*, in the disclosure at page 4. Reconsideration is expressly requested.

Claims 17-23 and 29-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Pall et al.* U.S. Patent No. 3,327,866 in view of *Buck* U.S. Patent No. 6,284,201.

Essentially the Examiner's position was that *Pall et al.* discloses the cloth or mesh recited in the claims except for a plurality of metal fiber threads worked in between the metal wires, that *Buck* discloses this feature, and that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to have inserted *Buck's* metallic threads into the woven wire mesh of *Pall et al.* as

motivated by a desire to create a filter having additional dimensional stability and improved strength.

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As set forth in claim 29 as amended, Applicants' invention provides a woven cloth made from a metal having a weft and warp including a plurality of metal wires and a plurality of metal fiber threads worked in between the metal wires. Each metal fiber thread includes a bundle of fibers with each fiber having a diameter less than 100  $\mu\text{m}$ , wherein a section through the metal section through the metal fiber thread has more than 100 fibers.

As more specifically recited in claim 19, the metal wires are woven together with the metal fiber threads, wherein the metal wires constitute the warp, and the metal fiber threads constitute the weft of the woven cloth. In this way, the metal fiber thread is arranged in a protective manner in the cloth and ideally has no crease marks which may cause the thread in part to be excessively compressed.

The primary reference to *Pall et al.* shows a filter with a fabric made up of extremely closely adjacent metallic weft wires and wires for the warp. It is respectfully submitted that with this structure shown in *Pall et al.*, it is no longer possible to incorporate a metal fiber yarn into a fabric as shown in *Pall et al.* Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that it would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to incorporate into the fabric of the filter shown in *Pall et al.* the metal fiber yarn shown in the secondary reference to *Buck* in order to increase the stability as suggested by the Examiner.

Furthermore, the secondary reference to *Buck* shows a knitted fabric that is quite loose in structure. See FIGS. 3, 4, 22 and 23 of *Buck*. FIG. 22 of *Buck* in particular shows how to incorporate a metal fiber yarn into the knitted fabric, which is described at col. 10, lines 26 to 41 of *Buck*. The loose structure of the fabric allows for incorporation of a fiber yarn for increased stability.

It is respectfully submitted that such an incorporation of a fiber yarn would not be possible into the fabric shown in *Pall et al.* for, as contrasted with a fabric, as shown in *Pall et al.*, a

knitted fabric is often of a loose structure, which makes it possible to interweave an additional yarn with the continuous wire.

In addition, FIGS. 9 through 12 of *Pall et al.* in particular show that incorporating a metal fiber yarn into the metallic fiber would reduce the stability of the fabric, rather than increase it. Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that such incorporation would strongly change the properties of the filter.

In contrast, Applicants' woven cloth as recited in claim 29 as amended does not incorporate an additional metal fiber yarn for increased stability into a knitted fabric like the one shown in *Buck*. Instead, as more specifically recited in claim 19 as amended, the weft fabric in a fabric such as *Pall et al.*'s fabric is replaced by a metal fiber yarn. It is respectfully submitted that one skilled in the art would not have made this replacement because such replacement would have been believed to reduce the stability of the *Pall et al.* fabric in that a metal fiber yarn would have a reduced stability over a metal wire. Surprisingly, Applicants have discovered that outstanding filter properties and sufficient stability could be obtained if the metal fiber yarn

includes a plurality of metal fiber threads worked in between the metal wires, with each metal fiber thread including a bundle of fibers and each fiber having a diameter of less than 100  $\mu\text{m}$  (preferably less than 30  $\mu\text{m}$  as recited in claim 30), wherein a section through the metal fiber has more than 100 fibers (preferably more than 500 fibers as recited in claim 30).

*Buck* teaches to increase the stability by incorporating a metal fiber yarn into a knitted fabric. Such increased stability can be obtained by incorporating a metal fiber yarn, but in a knitted fabric only. Replacing the weft of a fabric as shown in *Pall et al.* by a metal fiber yarn to one of ordinary skill in the art would obviously reduce the stability. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that *Buck* which shows a knitted fabric could not have taught one skilled in the art to replace the weft wire by a metal fiber yarn in a filter made from fabric as shown in *Pall et al.*

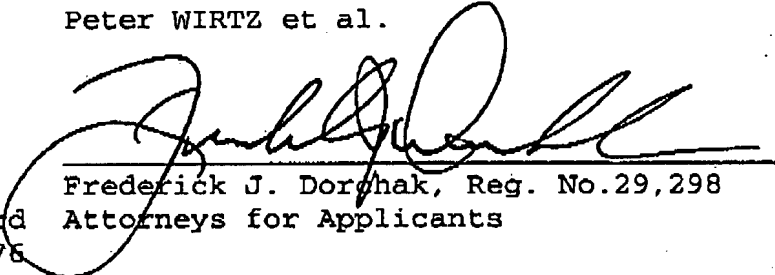
Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claim 29 as amended, together with claims 17-23 and 30-33 which depend directly or indirectly thereon, recite an obvious subject matter and are patentable over the cited references.

In summary, claims 17-23 and 29-33 have been amended. In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the claims be allowed and that this case be passed to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter WIRTZ et al.

COLLARD & ROE, P.C.  
1077 Northern Boulevard  
Roslyn, New York 11576  
(516) 365-9802  
FJD:djp

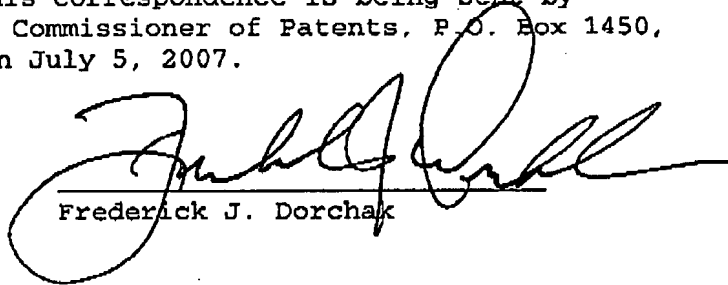


Frederick J. Dorchak, Reg. No.29,298  
Attorneys for Applicants

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Frederick J. Dorchak

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